

THE STAR

I was drunk and they
got me out of my car
put the bracelets on
and made me lie down
on the roadway
in the rain.

they stood in their
yellow raincoats
cops from 3
squadcars.

the water soaked
into my clothing.
I looked up
at the moon through
the raindrops,
thinking,
here I am
62 years old
and being
protected
from myself
again.

earlier that night
I had attended the
opening
of a movie
which portrayed the
life of a drunken
poet:
me.

this then was
my critical review
of their
effort.

PROBLEMS

I go to
this place to get a
foot rub-down to
release the
toxins.
the masseur has good
hands,
gets to talking.
well, it's about his bad
experiences with

women.
they ask him for
money.
he has a good
heart.
he gives it to them
but they won't give
him
any snatch.
been married
twice, shackled
once.
shack lasted two and
one half
years.
she got more and more
negative.
every time she
opened her mouth it
was something
critical.
kind of like having
poisoned darts
shot at you
night and day.

"how you doing with
the ladies?" he
asks.

"about the same."

"am I putting too much
pressure there?"

"yeah, you're just about
killing me"

"that's your
liver"

he works away and
talks away.
we are on
Avenida del Norte in
the Hollywood Riviera.
it is a 3 p.m.
Tuesday
and I haven't written
anything decent
in a couple
of weeks.

"I recently met this

Chinese wench," he
says, "and"

"OW! CHRIST!"

"that's your
pancreas," he
says.

"thanks," I tell
him, "move over to
the kidneys"

LONDON BRIDGES

"London Bridges falling down,
falling down! ...

all
fall
DOWN!"

and the little girls
would all fall
on their butts
laughing

and I'd see their
panties

then we'd get up,
hold hands
and
circle:

"London Bridges falling down,
falling down! ...

all
fall
DOWN!"

and I'd see their
panties
again.

"Hey, Henry," the guys
would say to me,
"you're always playing
with
the girls!"

"you guys are too

tough for me," I'd
tell them.

they liked that.

and my mother would
ask, "Henry, how come
the backs of your
pants
always have
grass stains?"

"what stains,
Mom?"

you don't know the
trouble I had
just to see
those
panties

and it's never
stopped.

A CAT IS A CAT IS A CAT IS
A CAT

she's whistling and clapping
for the cats
at 2 a.m.
as I sit in here
with my wine and my
Beethoven.

"they're just prowling," I
tell her

Beethoven rattles his bones
in majesty

and those damn cats
don't even care
about
any of that

and
if they did
I wouldn't like them
at
all:

things begin to lose their
natural value